

LISTING of CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) A cannula which increases in pliability during use, wherein, prior to application, said cannula comprises a material of a first variable hardness and a second material having a second hardness of which said material having the greater hardness is at least partially dissolved during use.
2. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 1, wherein the hardness of said material of first variable hardness decreases during use.
3. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 1, wherein the material of first variable hardness and the second material having the second hardness comprises a composite material.
4. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 3, wherein the material which changes during use, or is at least partially dissolved out, is the hardest material.
5. (Original) The cannula as set forth in claim 3, wherein said composite material contains a solid state material and an organic polymer.
6. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 1, wherein the material of the first variable hardness is or comprises a water-absorbing material.
7. (Original) The cannula as set forth in claim 6, wherein the water-absorbing material is a polymer.
8. (Original) The cannula as set forth in claim 6, wherein said polymer is based on a polyamide.

9. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 1, wherein the cannula consists only of materials of variable hardness.

10. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 1, wherein the cannula additionally contains a material which exhibits a lower hardness, prior to use, than the material of the first variable hardness.

11. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 10, wherein the material of the first variable hardness at least partially surrounds the material having a lower initial hardness.

12. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 10, wherein the material having a lower initial hardness at least partially surrounds the material of the first variable hardness.

13. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 10, wherein the hardness of the material having a lower initial hardness does not change during use.

14. (Original) The cannula as set forth in claim 1, wherein the material having the greater hardness at least partially surrounds the material having the lower hardness.

15. (Original) The cannula as set forth in claim 1, wherein the material having the lower hardness at least partially surrounds the material having the greater hardness.

16. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 14, wherein the material having the greater hardness is an absorbable material which is at least partially dissolved away from the cannula during use.

17. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 1, wherein its increase in pliability is completed within five hours, following the beginning of the use.

18. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 1, wherein its increase in pliability is completed within two hours, following the beginning of the use.

19. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 1, wherein its increase in pliability is completed within one hour, following the beginning of the use.

20. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 15, wherein the material having the greater hardness is a second cannula which is removed during use.

21. (Original) The cannula as set forth in claim 20, wherein the materials of differing hardness are separated by a layer, at least in sections.

22-25 (Canceled)

26. (Original) A cannula that increases in pliability during use, wherein prior to use the cannula comprises at least one material of variable hardness, said at least one material dissolved during use.

27. (Original) A cannula that increases in pliability during use, wherein prior to use the cannula comprises at least two materials of differing hardness, of which the material having the greater hardness is dissolved during use.

28. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 1, wherein the second material having a second hardness comprises a material having a second variable hardness.

29. (Previously Presented) A cannula that increases in pliability during use, wherein the cannula comprises a composite material formed by strips of material of an invariable hardness and by strips of a material of variable hardness, said strips of invariable and variable hardness arranged adjacent to each other in the circumferential direction, wherein, when the cannula is in use, the material of variable hardness decreases in hardness.

30. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 29, wherein the strips of invariable and variable hardness are arranged in an alternating configuration.

31. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 29, wherein the strips of invariable and variable hardness are arranged along a length of the cannula.
32. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 29, wherein the strips of invariable and variable hardness are arranged along one or more sections of the cannula.
33. (Previously Presented) A cannula that increases in pliability during use, wherein the cannula comprises a water-absorbing material of a first variable hardness that decreases in hardness upon water absorption, and a material having a second hardness.
34. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 33, wherein said material having the second hardness at least partially dissolves upon use.
35. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 33, wherein said water-absorbing material of a first variable hardness comprises a polymer having polar functional groups.
36. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 33, wherein when said cannula is in use, said cannula comprises a water absorbing inner side and a water absorbing outer side.
37. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 33, wherein said water-absorbing material of a first variable hardness comprises an outer material of said cannula, and said material having a second hardness comprises an inner material of said cannula.
38. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 33, wherein said water-absorbing material of a first variable hardness comprises an inner material of said cannula, and said material having a second hardness comprises an outer material of said cannula.
39. (Previously Presented) A cannula which increases its pliability during use, wherein, prior to application, said cannula comprises at least two materials having a different hardness of which

said material having the greater hardness is yielded during use, wherein said cannula has a bent shape.

40. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in the claim 39, wherein the cannula has a curved shape.

41. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 40, wherein the curved cannula comprises a radius of curvature of less than 5 cm.

42. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 41, wherein the radius of curvature is less than 0.5cm.

43. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 41, wherein the radius of curvature is less than 0.1cm.

44. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 39, wherein the material having the greater hardness is a second cannula, said second cannula being removed during use.

45. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 44, wherein the cannula with the greater hardness is a metallic needle, said metallic needle having an outer diameter in the range of 0.1mm to 0.3mm.

46. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 39, wherein the materials of differing hardness are separated by a layer, at least partially in sections.

47. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 39, wherein the material having the lower hardness comprises a material having a hardness that can vary during use.

48. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 47, wherein the hardness decreases during use.

49. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 39, for use in a transcutaneous infusion set, a transcutaneous perfusion set or a catheter head.

50. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 39, wherein said cannula is configured in a transcutaneous infusion set.

51. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 39, wherein said cannula is configured in a transcutaneous perfusion set.

52. (Previously Presented) The cannula as set forth in claim 39, wherein said cannula is configured in a catheter head for a transcutaneous infusion set, in which the cannula forms an infusing part of said catheter head.